

National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

State Convention 2020

# “FEARLESS IN UNCERTAIN TIMES”

# AGENDA

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

OF ILLINOIS

ANNUAL CONVENTION

October 30-November 1, 2020

# Members of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois (NFBI) wish to thank the following donors for their generous gifts:

Advanced Group

The Eileen S. Andrew Foundation

J. Milton Harris and Alice Chenault

Dr. and Mrs. Neal Hart of the Illinois Prairie Foundation

The Illinois Association of Blind Merchants

Invesco Inc.

Community Foundation Great River Bend - Mildred Crespin-Krogear Fund

Mr. Harold W. Knapheide III, in honor of his mother, the late Mary MacDill Knapheide

The Community Foundation of the Quincy Area from the Arthur O. and Lela B. Lindsay Fund

Gary Lindon

The Naperville Noon Lion’s Club

The Pangere Corporation

Trinity Fellowship

Richard Lansden, trustee, The Leona Stanford Vollintine Charitable Trust

# LOGISTICS, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS

Welcome to the 52nd annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois. The convention will have the same activities you have come to know and love. Since we are having a virtual convention, we will be doing a few things differently.

## Announcements

If you have announcements you wish to be made from the convention floor, you can email them to President Denise Avant at [davant1958@gmail.com](mailto:davant1958@gmail.com) or text her at 773-991-8050.

## Zoom Etiquette

We will have many presentations during pre-convention and general sessions. When you enter our sessions, you will be muted. You will have no ability to unmute yourself until invited by the host. Please do not unmute unless the Zoom hosts invite you to do so. If you wish to talk, please raise your hand.

The following Zoom commands will aid you in participating in this year’s virtual convention. To mute and unmute audio, press Alt+A for Windows users, Command+Shift+A for Mac and iPad keyboard users, and \*+6 for phone users, and the mute and unmute button on the lower left for iOS users. To start and stop video, press Alt+V for Windows users and Command+Shift+v for Mac and iPad keyboard users. The start and stop video on an iPhone can be found in the lower left-hand part of the screen. To raise and lower your hand, press Alt-Y for Windows users, Option+Y for Mac and iPad keyboard users, and \*+9 for Phone users. The raise and lower hand button is found under the more tab in iOS.

## Zoomm Information for all but Scholarship Dinner and Parents’ Breakouts

To access the pre-convention activities, student lunch, student business meeting, general sessions, and banquet, use the following Zoom information:

NFB OF ILLINOIS, DENISE AVANT, PRESIDENT is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: National Federation of the Blind of Illinois 52d Annual Convention

Time: Oct 29-November 1, 2020Times will be in Central Time (US and Canada)

Consult agenda for pre-convention activities, student lunch, student business meeting, general sessions, and banquet.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/4276313127?pwd=YkVXelNLWVQrK0FpWTk4SUJnZWFDZz09>

Meeting ID: 427 631 3127

Passcode: 6324

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,4276313127#,,,,,,0#,,6324# US (Chicago)

## Zoom Information - Scholarship Dinner and Parent Breakouts

The virtual scholarship dinner and the parent breakout have different Zoom credentials that will be sent to those participants.

# National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

Denise R. Avant, President

3410 N. Lake Shore Dr., Apt. 4L-M

Chicago, IL 60657 (773) 991-8050

National Federation of the Blind of Illinois (“NFBI”)

[NFBI Website](http://www.nfbofillinois.org)

[National Federation of the Blind Website](https://nfb.org/free-cane-program)

# Door prizes

The Door prizes always add fun to our convention. Since our convention is virtual, we ask that you donate cash only. If you wish to contribute to our door prize, you can submit your donation to Patti Chang by Zelle at [pchang@nfb.org](mailto:pchang@nfb.org). Alternatively, you can mail her a check made out to “NFBI” to 6919 W. Berwyn Ave., Chicago, IL. 60656. The door prize chair for this year’s convention is Ellen Bartelt, a board member of the Illinois Association of Blind Students. You must be present to win. If your name is called during convention, you will have to be present and raise or lower your hand when your name is called or email [ildoorprizes@gmail.com](mailto:ildoorprizes@gmail.com). For people without email, your chapter president will be your contact and will email the door prize chair. You will have two minutes to claim your prize.

# Voting

On Sunday, November 1, during its business meeting, the Illinois Association of Blind Students will have elections for all of its officers and two general board seats. Later that morning, during final general session, the affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois will have elections for all of its officers and two general board seats. You must be present and a dues paying member of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois to vote in our elections. When voting, you can only call or text from the number you specified at nfbvote.org.

# PRE-CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

## Diversity and Inclusion

On October 22, 2020, 6:30-8:30 PM, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee invites you to a town hall discussion about diversity and inclusion in the Illinois affiliate. The diversity and inclusion committee welcomes our members to engage in a conversation on diverse identities and the importance of inclusion. We will explore topics such as; what is intersectionality and, how does privilege affect everyone. Additionally, we will discuss what you the members would like to see from the committee in terms of initiatives and programming moving forward.

## At Large Chapter

At Large will have a virtual social happy hour on October 29, 2020 from 7:00-9:00 PM. The At Large Chapter wants to keep its tradition of having a social event to kick off convention. Come meet Chapter President, Marilyn Green and the members of this great chapter.

## NFB-Newsline®

NFB-Newsline® is a service provided by the National Federation of the Blind. The service provides to eligible blind users over 500 publications, including, international, national and state publications, blindness related content and much more. With the release of iOS 3.0, users will now have access to KNFB Reader mobile basic to scan documents while reading your favorite publications. You can access NFB Newsline by telephone, computer, smart Phone applications, Alexa and the Victor Reader Stream. To sign up for NFB Newsline in Illinois, contact, David Meyer, (708)-6067091 to sign up. Lee Martin of the NFB of Indiana has graciously agreed to exhibit NFB Newsline at our convention on October 30, 2020 from 4:00-7:00 PM.

## Exhibitors

On Friday, October 30, 2020, there will be several companies exhibiting virtually via the Zoom platform. Their hours are from 4:00-7:00 PM. You will find their Zoom information on our website, nfbofillinois.org.

The exhibitors are:

### Guide Dogs For the Blind,

350 Los Ranchitos Road

San Rafael, CA, 94903

(773)-671-6624

pberman@guidedogs.com

Pam Berman

### En-Vision America

825 4th St., E

Palmetto, FL 34221

(309)-452-3088

[lhaley@envisionamerica.com](mailto:lhaley@envisionamerica.com)

Lindsay Haley

### Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

2200 Pennsylvania Ave., Suite 300 E

Washington, D.C. 20037

(202)-875-4714

Jennifer.lyman@vanda.com

Jennifer Lyman

### Independence Science

3000 Kent Ave., Suite 1303

West Lafayette, ID 47906

(866)-862-9665

aneybert@independenceschience.com

Ashley Neybert

## Illinois Association of Blind Students Trivia Night- Friday Evening

Come join the Illinois Association of Blind Students on October 30, at 7 PM as they host a fun night of trivia and other activities. Topics include United States history, NFB history, Sports, Literature, Halloween and Pop culture. There will also be a “Table Talk” game after trivia concludes. It is just $5 to join in on the fun and support the student division paid when you register online. We hope to see you there to support the students.

## Braille is Beautiful – Sunday Morning

Join us on Sunday morning, November 1, at 9:35 to hear a dramatic reading of Harry Potter: Keeper of the Keys. Reading Braille is fun. If you wish to participate in Braille is Beautiful, contact Deborah Kent Stein at 773-203-1394 or email her at [dkent5817@att.net](mailto:dkent5817@att.net).

# Announcement

You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois can be made in the form of a will, or living trust, an income generating gift, or by naming us as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy. For additional information, please contact Patti Chang at (773) 307-6440 or at [pchang@nfb.org](mailto:pchang@nfb.org).

The PAC Plan allows members, affiliates, chapters, and others to give a regular and automatic donation to the Federation every month. All you need to provide is your checking or savings account identification information. Because of the costs associated with operating the program, the minimum donation is $5 a month and there is no restriction on how much you donate. If you wish to sign up as a new member on the PAC plan or increase/decrease your contribution, you can go to [www.nfb.org/pac](http://www.nfb.org/pac).

# Welcome!!!

**Welcome to the 2020 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois**

# Thursday, October 22, 2020 Evening

6:30-8:30 PM Beginning the Conversation on Diversity and Inclusion – Marilyn Green and Sara Luna, Co-chairs of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois Diversity and Inclusion Committee

# Thursday, October 29 Evening

7:00-9:00 PM At Large Meet and Greet – Host, Marilyn Green, President, At Large Chapter

# Friday, October 30, Afternoon

2:00-3:00 PM Federation Philosophy – Pamela Allen, 1st Vice President and CEO of the Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind and Executive Director of the Louisiana Center for the Blind

3:10-3:30 PM Delivery of Rehabilitation Services During COVID-19 in Illinois – John Gordon, Chief, Illinois Bureau of Blind Services

3:40-4:00 PM Resolutions Committee – Michal Nowicki and Dustin Cather, Co-chairs, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois Resolutions Committee

4:00-7:00 PM Virtual Visit with Exhibitors Using the Zoom Platform

5:00-6:00 PM Virtual Scholarship Dinner: Invitation Only – Deborah Kent Stein, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois Scholarship Committee

# Friday, October 30, 2020 Evening

7:00-9:00 PM The Illinois Association of Blind Students Presents: Trivia Night and Table Talk, ($5) – Host Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, Illinois Association of Blind Students

# Saturday, October 31, 2020 Morning

9:00-11:30 AM General Session

9:00-9:15AM Welcome and Introduction – Denise Avant, President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

Announcements

Pledge of Allegiance

National Federation of the Blind Pledge

Moment of Silence

Abraham Rami Rabby, President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois (June 29, 1942-April 17, 2020)

Stephen O. Benson, President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois (November 20, 1941-March 22, 2020)

9:15-9:45 AM Chicago Chapter Award – Presenter David Meyer, President of the Chicago Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois to the Honorable Laurie E. Lightfoot, Mayor City of Chicago

9:45-10:15 AM National Report – Pamela Allen, 1st Vice President and CEO of the National Federation of the Blind Board of Directors and Executive Director of the Louisiana Center for the Blind

10:15-10:25 National Association of Blind Students Report – Nina Marranca, Board Member, National Association of Blind Students

10:25-10:35 AM National Federation of the Blind Changes Lives – Juliet Walker, Chicago Chapter Member

10:35-11:05 AM Virtual Learning for Blind Children in Illinois – Amy Deegan, LCSW, Principal Consultant Low Incidence: DHH/DB/VI, Special

Education Department, Illinois State Board of Education and Molly Dunn, NSSEO Coordinator of Satellite Programs and Itinerant Services and Co-Chair Illinois Vision Leadership Council

11:05-11:25 AM Using NFB Newsline – Lee Martin, Coordinator and Channel Administrator for the National Federation of the Blind of Indiana

11:25-11:30 Announcements

# Saturday, October 31, 2020 Virtual Student/Parent Lunch

12:00-1:00 PM Illinois Association of Blind Students Lunch – Host Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, Illinois Association of Blind Students

12:05-12:15 PM Student Excellence Awards – Presenters; Dustin Cather, 1st Vice President, IABS, Glenn Moore, Treasurer, IABS, and Ellen Bartelt, IABS Board Member

12:15-12:30 PM A Word from the Scholarship Finalists – Deborah Kent Stein, National Federation of the Blind Scholarship Chair

12:30-12:40 PM Taking the Leap to Grow - Mina Marranca, Member of the Board of Directors, National Association of Blind Students

12:40 - 1:00 PM Persevering Through Academia Amidst A Pandemic - Moderator, Sara Luna;

Panelists, Ellen Bartelt, Alex Gamino, Elizabeth Sprecher and Sabrina Kimbrough

# Saturday, October 31, 2020 Afternoon

## 2:00-3:30 PM Parent Breakout: Advocating for Blind Children in a Virtual World

2:00-2:20 PM Introductions - Nelly Gamino, Parent, Berwyn, Illinois

2:20-3:00 PM Know Your Rights and Get the Education Your Child Deserves - Carlton Anne Cook Walker, President, National Organization of Parents of Blind Children, Carlisle, Pennsylvania

3:00-3:30 PM On Task and on Target: Making the Most of Online Education - Moderator, Carlton Anne Cook Walker, Carlisle, Pennsylvania; Panelists: Nelly Gamino, Parent, Berwyn, Illinois; Liza Jager, Parent, Oak Park, Illinois; Jennifer Howe, Parent, St. Charles, Illinois

# Saturday, October 31, 2020 Afternoon Continued

## 2:00-4:30 PM General Session

2:00-3:00 PM Diversity and Inclusion Committee Presents:

Thought Provoker, Lived Experiences of Diverse Identities – Moderator Shawn Callaway, Member of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind, President of the NFB of the District of Columbia and Co-chair of the NFB Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Exploring the Intersection of Blindness and Diverse Identities – Ever Lee Hairston, Board Member National Federation of the Blind, Dr. Natalie L. Shaheen, Assistant Professor Illinois State University and Sara Luna, Co-chair of NABS and NFBI Diversity and Inclusion Committees

3:05-3:25 PM The Right to Cast a Vote Accessibly, Independently and Confidentially in Illinois – Lou Anne Blake, JD, Deputy Director of Initiatives, National Federation of the Blind

3:30-3:40 PM Making Science Accessible – Michael Hingson, Spokesman for Independence Science

3:40-4:00 PM Virtual BELL®, Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning) In Home Academy – Presenter Deborah Kent Stein, Illinois BELL Coordinator; Thomas Howe and Charlie Jager and their parents

4:00-4:15 PM A Confidence Builder: My Summer at Blind Inc. – Elizabeth Sprecher, Secretary of Illinois Association of Blind Students and Jennifer Kennedy, Executive Director, Blind Inc.

4:15-4:20 PM Scholarships and Internship Opportunities – Deborah Kent Stein, Chair of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois Scholarship Committee

4:20-4:25 PM Washington Seminar 2021 – Marilyn Green, Chair of National Federation of the Blind of Illinois Federal Legislation Committee

4:25-4:30 PM Ways to Donate – Patti Chang, National Federation of the Blind Outreach Coordinator

# Saturday, October 31, 2020 Evening

6:00-to 8:00 PM Virtual Banquet MC Marilyn Green, 2d Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

6:05-6:10 PM Welcome and Invocation- Eileen Truschke, Secretary Chicago Chapter

6:10-6:20PM Remembering National Federation of the Blind of Illinois President Stephen O. Benson: November 20, 1941-March 22, 2020 – Steve Hastalis, Mary Grunwald, Pam Gillmore and Pam Provost

6:20-6:30 PM Videotape Greetings - Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, Illinois 8th Congressional District

6:30-6:40 PM Freedom Link: Learning Computer Skills – Presenter Deborah Kent Stein, 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois; Patrick St. Arnaud and Maria Bagry, Freedom Link Students

6:40-6:55 PM Awards

Ileen O’Brien Award - Presenter Patti Chang to Dr. Janet Szlyk, CEO of Chicago Lighthouse for People who are Blind and Visually Impaired

Chicago Chapter Award - Presenter David Meyer to Karen Tamley, President and CEO of Access Living Chicago and Commissioner Emeritus of Chicago Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities

6:55-7:10 PM Fifteen for Funds – Cathy Randall, Member of the Board of Directors, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

7:10-7:40 PM Banquet Address - Pamela Allen, 1st Vice President and CEO of the National Federation of the Blind and Executive Director of the Louisiana Center for the Blind

7:40-8:00 PM Scholarship Awards – Deborah Kent Stein, Scholarship Chair of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

8:00 PM Adjourn

# Sunday, November 1, 2020 Morning

8:00-9:00AM Illinois Association of Blind Students Business Meeting, IABS 1st Vice President Dustin Cather

Note: All are welcome to attend this meeting but only those who have paid dues specifically to our IABS chapter can vote in IABS elections.

8:05-8:10 AM Introductions

8:10-8:15 PM Treasurers Report

8:15-8:25 PM Presidents report

8:25-9:00 PM Elections

Officers

President Currently Held by Emma Meyer

1st Vice President Currently Held by Dustin Cather

2d Vice President Currently Held by Amy Bosko

Secretary Currently Held by Rupa Elizabeth Sprecher

Treasurer Currently Held by Glenn Moore

General Board Seats

Board Seat 1 Currently Held by Kaitlin Ryan

Board Seat 2 Currently Held by Ellen Bartelt

9:00 AM IABS Meeting Adjourned

# Sunday, November 1, 2020 Morning Continued

9:30-12:30 PM General Session

9:30-9:35 AM Call to Order

9:35-10:10 AM Braille is Beautiful: A Dramatic Reading of Harry Potter and the Keeper of the Keys – Deborah Kent Stein, Author and 1st Vice President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

10:10-10:20 AM Closing Remarks – Nina Marranca, NABS Student Representative

10:20-10:30 AM Closing Remarks – Pamela Allen, NFB National Representative

10:30-11:10 AM State Reports

Treasury Report – Patti Chang, Treasurer, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

Presidents Report – Denise Avant, President, National Federation of the Blind of Illinois

11:10-11:30 AM Chapter Reports

Illinois Association of Blind Merchants – Ed Birmingham

Illinois Association of Blind Students – Dustin Cather

Chicago Chapter – David Meyer

At Large Chapter – Marilyn Green

Blackhawk Chapter – Jean Rauschenbach

Four Rivers Chapter – Brian Sumner

11:30-12:00 PM Resolutions – Michal Nowicki and Dustin Cather, Co-chairs, NFBI Resolutions Committee

12:00-12:30 PM Elections

Note: Only those who are current dues paying members can vote in this election.

Officers:

President Currently Held by Denise Avant

1st Vice President Currently Held by Deborah Kent Stein

2d Vice President Currently Held by Marilyn Green

Secretary Currently Held by David Meyer

Treasurer Currently Held by Patti Gregory Chang

General Board Seats

Board Seat 1 Currently Held by Cathy Randall

Board Seat 2 Currently Held by Patricia Olson

Delegate: Currently Held by Denise Avant

1st Alternate Currently Held by Debbie Stein

2d Alternate Currently Held by Patti Chang

12:30 PM Adjourned

# Thank You

Thanks to all of our Zoom hosts, our sound engineer, those tracking our membership and voting records and anyone else who helped with this year’s virtual state convention. Also, thanks to all of you who donated money for our door prizes and contributed to the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois. All of you have helped make this convention a tremendous success.

# NFB PLEDGE

I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind; to support the policies and programs of the Federation; and to abide by its constitution.

# One-Minute Message

The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.